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IN BRIEF

A new format of the magazine Lunch will be published in October. Lunch "will take a radical look at the straight and gay societies in which the homosexual lives; will explore the possibility of more aggressive approaches to social and cultural change and will examine the personalities and problems of the gay scene. Until recently Lunch has been the house magazine for the Campaign for Homosexual Equality but is now "effectively independent and hopefully more radical". It will sell at 25p (from 59 Bridge Lane, London, N.11.)

Eight members of Vietnam Veterans Against the War were acquitted at Gainesville, Florida on charges of plotting violent disruption at the Republican National Convention. The Government's case rested largely on testimony from informers and undercover agents.

SPAIN's new law on conscientious objection changes only to remain the same. Objectors are still liable to four years' imprisonment with longer sentences in wartime and under martial law. 'Cat and mouse' clauses will still operate for non-religious objectors. Finally, objectors must have no connection with a trade union dispute.

Unity Theatre, 1 Goldington Street, London, N.W.1 is reported as looking for new scripts. Small cast plays of 'social significance' are required both for staging at the theatre and on tour. No objections to revues, pantomimes or musicals. Send to Raymond Cross c/o the theatre with a stamped addressed envelope.

Billy Graham believes that God has a computer. A correspondent in The Times suggests that people faced with the problem of bureaucracy which answers all enquiries by access to a computer should write a letter on the enquiry in an uncommon foreign language. He tried Swedish and got an immediate and satisfactory (human) answer.

A writer in Siren : newsletter of Anarcho-Feminism (c/o Solidarity Bookshop, 713 Armitage Av., Chicago, Ill. 60614 USA) says, "I don't feel anarchism should be accepted uncritically by anyone. It is still a male-originated theory and we will still have to develop a feminist critique of anarchism before we can accept it..."

S. E. Parker (of Minus One) and Albert Meltzer (of Black Flag) effectively demolish in the same journal the myth of Boxcar Bertha's radical views. Such a pity!

Martin Sostre (see FREEDOM 7 July 1973) has been transferred to Clinton Prison (Box B), Dannemora, N.Y. 12929. He is still in solitary confinement (since last November) and his new location makes visits more difficult. His Defence Committee: P.O. Box 839, Ellicott Station, Buffaloe, New York 14205.

Jim Greenfield of the Stoke Newington Four has been transferred to Wakefield 'top security' jail. The Defence Committee would be glad to know of anyone living in or near Wakefield who can offer hospitality occasionally to visitors. Write to the Committee c/o Mike Cohen, 54 Harcombe Road, Stoke Newington, London, N. 16.

According to the London Evening Standard participants in the Bank Holiday Festival of the People (in Windsor Park) scored a victory after a 'summit' meeting of senior policemen who said, "We have a firm promise that they /the 'people'/ will leave on Monday and on that promise we do not intend to take any action to move them at the moment." Bill Dwyer is reported as saying, "This is a great victory for commonsense. We have said all along that we intended to stay for ten days and we shall keep our word."

Our comrade George Leaf of Leeds tells us of a fellow pensioner who spoke to a social worker about her difficulties in shopping. She was given the advice: Have you ever thought of shopping by taxi?

LETTER

TACTICS FOR TODAY

Dear Comrades,

To read a piece of vintage Mein Kampf (somewhat rehashed by John Tyndall, leader of the National Front) quoted at length in FREEDOM ("British Anarchism - tactics for today" 1-9-73) with approval, is quite an event.

As Peter Newell, the author of this piece, desperately desires to be involved in what is the very kernel of fascist philosophy, it is understandable that he should feel very personally frustrated by his contact with the anarchist movement. I would suggest that the solution to his personal dilemma lies in his joining the National Front. At the moment he says that he abhors "most" of the views "espounded" (sic) by its leader, John Tyndall, but surely that could be put right by Newell replacing Tyndall in a struggle for leadership? After all, the revolutionary socialist Benito Mussolini did very well when he "espounded" (=espoused + expounded) views which appealed more to the emotions than to the intellect, in contrast to his earlier socialism. It is true that Mussolini ended up hanging upside-down outside a petrol station riddled with bullets -- a tribute to the crude, working-class opinion of him in Italy. But perhaps such a "hero"s death appeals to people who write as Newell does. At least it ensures that we do not "just fade away and die".

Tony Gibson

London.

ANARCHISM & SYNDICALISM

N O T E: THIS ARTICLE BY MALATESTA IS TO BE CONTINUED IN NEXT ISSUE.

It was written for FREEDOM in November, 1907; and where the word 'syndicalism' is used it is synonymous with trade unionism.

THE QUESTION of the position to be taken in relation to the labour movement is certainly one of the greatest importance to anarchists.

In spite of lengthy discussions and of varied experiences, a complete accord has not yet been reached--perhaps because the question does not admit of a complete and permanent solution, owing to the different conditions and changing circumstances in which we carry on the struggle.

I believe, however, that our aim may suggest to us a criterion of conduct applicable to the different contingencies.

We desire the moral and material elevation of all men; we wish to achieve a revolution which will give to all liberty and well-being, and we are convinced that this cannot be done from above by force of law and decrees, but must be done by the conscious will and the direct action of those who desire it. We need, then, more than any the conscious and voluntary co-operation of those who, suffering the most by the present social organisation, have the greatest interest in the Revolution.

It does not suffice for us - though it is certainly useful and necessary - to elaborate an ideal as perfect as possible, and to form groups for propaganda and for revolutionary action. We must convert as far as possible the mass of the workers, because without them we can neither overthrow the existing society nor reconstitute a new one. And since to rise from the submissive state in which the great majority of the proletarians now vegetate, to a conception of anarchism and a desire for its realisation, is required an evolution which generally is not passed through under the sole influence of the propaganda; since the lessons derived from the facts of daily life are more efficacious than all doctrinaire preaching, it is for us to take an active part in the life of the masses, and to use all the means which circumstances permit to gradually awaken the spirit of revolt, and to show by these facts the path which leads to emancipation.

Amongst these means the labour movement stands first, and we should be wromg to neglect it. In this movement we find numbers of workers who struggle for the amelioration of their conditions. They may be mistaken as to the aim they have in view and as to the means of attaining it, and in our view they generally are. But at least they no longer resign themselves to oppression nor regard it as just - they hope and they struggle. We can more easily arouse in them that feeling of solidarity towards their exploited fellow-workers and of hatred against exploitation which must lead to a definitive struggle for the abolition of all domination of man over man. We can induce them to claim more and more, and by means more and more energetic; and so we can train ourselves and others to the struggle, profiting by victories in order to exalt the power of union and of direct action, and bring forward greater claims, and profiting also by reverses in order to learn the necessity for more powerful means and for more radical solutions.

Again - and this is not its least advantage - the labour movement can prepare those groups of technical workers who in the revolution will take upon themselves the organisation of production and exchange for the advantage of all, beyond and against all governmental power.

But with all these advantages the labour movement has its drawbacks and its dangers, of which we ought to take account when it is a question of the position that we as anarchists should take in it.

* * *

Constant experience in all countries shows that labour movements, which always commence as movements of protest and revolt, and are animated at the beginning by a broad spirit of progress and human fraternity, tend very soon to degenerate; and in proportion as they acquire strength, they become egoistic, conservative, occupied exclusively with interests immediate and restricted, and develop within themselves a bureaucracy which, as in all such cases, has no other object than to strengthen and aggrandise itself.

It is this condition of things that has induced many comrades to withdraw from the Trade Union movement, and even to combat it as something reactionary and injurious. But the result has been that our influence diminished accordingly, and the field was left free to those who wished to exploit the movement for personal or party interests that had nothing in common with the cause of the workers' emancipation. Very soon there were only organisations with a narrow spirit and fundamentally conservative, of which the English Trade Unions are a type; or else Syndicates which, under the influence of politicians, most often "Socialist", were only electoral machines for the elevation into power of particular individuals.

Happily, other comrades thought that the labour movement always held in itself a sound principle, and that rather than abandon it to the politicians, it would be well to undertake the task of bringing them /the unions/ once more to the work of achieving their original aims, and of gaining from them all the advantages they offer to the anarchist cause. And they have succeeded in creating, chiefly in France, a new movement which, under the name of "Revolutionary Syndicalism", seeks to organise the workers, indpendently of all bourgeois and political influence, to win their emancipation by the direct action of the wage-slaves against the masters.

That is a great step in advance; but we must not exaggerate its reach and imagine, as some comrades do, that we shall realise anarchism, as a matter of course, by the progressive development of syndicalism.

Every institution has a tendency to extend its functions, to perpetuate itself, and to become an end in itself. It is not surprising, then, if those who have initiated the movement, and take the most prominent part therein, fall into the habit of regarding syndicalism as anarchism, or at least as the supreme means, that in itself replaces all other means, for its realisation. But that makes it the more necessary to avoid the danger and to define well our position.

Syndicalism, in spite of all the declarations of its most ardent supporters, contains in itself, by the very nature of its function, all the elements

of degeneration which have corrupted labour movements in the past. In effect, being a movement which proposes to defend the present interests of the workers, it must necessarily adapt itself to existing conditions, and take into consideration interests which come to the fore in society as it exists today.

Now, in so far as the interests of a section of the workers coincide with the interests of the whole class, syndicalism is in itself a good school of solidarity; in so far as the interests of the workers of one country are the same as those of the workers in other countries, syndicalism is a good means of furthering international brotherhood; in so far as the interests of the moment are not in contradiction with the interests of the future, syndicalism is in itself a good preparation for the Revolution. But unfortunately this is not always so.

Harmony of interests, solidarity amongst all men, is the ideal to which we aspire, is the aim for which we struggle; but that is not the actual condition, no more between men of the same class than between those of different classes. The rule today is the antagonism and the interdependence of interests at the same time: the struggle of each against all and of all against each. And there can be no other condition in a society where, in consequence of the capitalist system of production - that is to say, production founded on monopoly of the means of production and organised internationally for the profit of individual employers - there are, as a rule, more hands than work to be done, and more mouths than bread to fill them.

It is impossible to isolate oneself, whether as an individual, as a class, or as a nation, since the condition of each one depends more or less directly on the general conditions of the whole of humanity; and it is impossible to live in a true state of peace, because it is necessary to defend oneself, often even to attack, or perish.

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..continued from P.1

BOMBS

know what the heck it was all about. All the police would tell my flat-mate, who let them in, was that they were looking for hand-grenades and sub-machine guns. I am really annoyed at the heavy-handed way they carried on... I am terribly against the idea of people being blown up, and I don't want people thinking we support these attacks." Mr. Turner is a pop-singer with a group called The Warkwind which has recorded a number called 'Urban Guerilla' including the words, "I'm an urban guerilla. I make bombs in my cellar. Watch out, Mr. Businessman. Your empire will explode." Mr. Turner, who is the singer on the record, has asked the recording company to withdraw the disc.

Such would-be 'urban guerillas' as Nick Turner and Gery Lawless contribute to the romantic myth of the IRA seeking to unite Ireland and drive out the British imperialists and their lackeys. "The Republicans have been called many things, but only in the mirror of their own propaganda are they revolutionary. Central to these ideological nonenities is the belief that they are waging a crusade for national liberation. In the course of their antique polemics on 'the vicious shackles of Orange capitalism', occasionally they forget themselves enough to denounce Irish capitalism but only insofar as it has sold out to British capitalism." This criticism has been made by a group known as APID Ireland (112 Thomas Street, Dublin 8) in a pamphlet called (perhaps) The Sheep Will Reveal Their Fangs.

The utter banality and boredom of Irish political and national polemic makes it almost impossible to read, let alone distinguish what is behind all these usually wild and whirling words on Ireland. The APID group's pamphlet despite its situationist cover and language lapses is one of the best and clearest voices to come out of Ireland for some while. The effect of the bombs and gun fire is to deafen us, but for centuries discussion on the politics of Ireland has been a 'dialogue of the deaf'.

Drowned by the exploding bombs was the issue by the National Council for Civil Liberties, the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association and the Association for Legal Justice of a demand to the United Nations for an investigation of the 'gross and reliably attested violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms in Northern Ireland". Claims made are that more than a hundred innocent civilians have been killed deliberately, recklessly or carelessly by the security forces. Since the introduction of detention without trial more than one thousand people have complained about torture, brutality or ill-treatment. Since 1968 no police officer has been convicted of assaulting a civilian.

Not quite forgotten was the indiscreet remark of a brave coroner, Major Hubert O'Neill, that the shootings in Londonderry were 'bloody murder', and the words of the Bishop at a memorial service to Lord Brookborough that his late lordship was responsible for the policy of Northern Ireland as we find it today were explained away as a misinterpretation or an unfortunate choice of phrase. But dear Mr. Heath was there under heavy guard acting the petulant prefect ticking off the Irish politicians and telling them to 'sort themselves out'. What it seems Mr. Heath should have said is that they should get together for the sake of the status quo. This they probably will do. One finds particularly touching (and fitting) that Mr. Heath should have been presented with a model of Morning Cloud, his yacht, in lard. The attitudes struck by politicians will no doubt melt away like lard in the sun. When it shines promisingly upon them. Even the Provisionals and the Officials have been meeting this weekend to reassure each other that the Provisional who was shot last week was, indeed, as the Army claimed, shot by the Army.

Jack Robinson

SUNDAY 9th September. Bike-in. Organised by COMMITMENT. Meet Euston Station forecourt at 11 a.m. Crash helmets and gas masks to be worn if possible.

POSTCARDS. Available now from Kropotkin's Lighthouse Publications, c/o Housmans Bookshop, 5 Caledonian Road, London N1. Proudhon postcards 23p for 10 inc. post. Incredible String Band postcards: 'May the Long Time Sun...' in assorted colours 27p for 12 inc. post.

We welcome news, articles, letters. Latest date for receipt of copy is Monday of the week of publication. Earlier is helpful.

LETTERS

ANGRY BRIGADE ECHOES

I

Dear Comrades,

A few notes pertaining to the Christie/Walter diatribes:

What does N. Walter mean when writing "revolutionary syndicalism, based on the class struggle and the organisation of the proletariat, rather than true anarchism, based on opposition to authority and the liberation of the people"? (my emphasis). This statement, implying that class struggle and the organisation of the proletariat are not part of the 'true anarchist' struggle, stinks of a liberal outlook. Doesn't N.W. think the fight against authority relationships is implicit in authentic class struggle (ruling class against ruled), and obviously also the liberation of the people. Any anarcho-syndicalist or class-struggle anarchist would think so, I am sure. Wake up N.W., unless you want to end up along with many other so-called 'anarchists' on the "dustheap of history". The only place where libertarian ideas can be relevant, authentic, and effective is in the class struggle.

Fraternally,

Rupert Williams

Norwich

II

N.W. asks (FREEDOM 25 Aug.) what I'm talking about calling him naive. He's written (Listener 2nd August): "There is in fact no evidence to suggest any members of the Angry Brigade were anarchists." Without accepting the five people sentenced after the trials were AB members I think it naive to take as lack of evidence of belief the non-espousal of anarchist views by people who might have suffered from such opinions being known. Stuart Christie was chastised for his views at the trial and others did not fail to observe the open bias against a person having anarchist views.

N.W.'s writings are not blamed for just being critical, the SN8 publication "If you want Peace Prepare for War" criticised the AB. It would be wrong to deny credit to N.W. for some of the letters and articles he wrote concerning aspects of the trial (I'm thinking especially of the Guardian letter after the trial), but so many remarks were ill-timed and unnecessary - the petty criticism of the use of the word Angry comes to mind. At a time of trial criticism should be secondary and fraternal, support is the greatest need in such a situation.

Lastly. To avoid misunderstandings, the review of "Anarchy in Action" in Time Out 181 was not by N.W. but by myself.

J.W.

III

Dear Freedom,

Once again we are treated to Mr. Walter's distortion of facts and his defence of non-violent progressive liberalism masquerading as Anarchism. He attempts to palm his ideas off as Anarchist, at the same time dismissing true Anarchism and calling it by another name, revolutionary syndicalism. What a disgusting piece of double-think!

Revolutionary Anarchism implies not only the recognition of the class struggle and the organisation of the proletariat, but also opposition to authority and the liberation of the people. While others are active in building the Anarchist movement and spreading libertarian ideas. Walter makes a name for himself as an "Anarchologist" and the friendly local apologist for naughty militants to the liberal press. If Walter believes himself to be an expert on the history of Anarchism, he should look at the creation of the modern Anarchist current (from 1865 onwards) and the writings of people like Bakunin, Malatesta, Makhno, yes and...Kropotkin! where he will find all these obscene references to (goodness gracious!) the class struggle.

But it looks as if Mr. Walter is impervious to facts so we should stop wasting time arguing logically with him, and tell him, along with all the others of his ilk, to take a long walk off a short pier!

Yours fraternally,

Nick Heath

Oxford.

THE BOMBS

M.C. asks "What Do The Bombs Say?" - yet never suggests they might speak of a realisation that the possibility of changing the direction of events by any other means is extremely remote. She only suggests anarchists should "get talking to ordinary people" which is something FREEDOM has not conspicuously succeeded in doing over the years. Nor is any attempt made at distinguishing clearly between terrorism - the deliberate attempt to kill or maim innocent people and violent action that is aimed at demonstrating resistance and attempts to damage or destroy property.

We have the communique from the Freedom Fighters for All described as a manifesto, which it never pretends to be, we have the petrol cans at Aldershot as being "addressed to the Aldershot army officers" when they were obviously intended to damage property not people, we have workers in the motor industry "only in it for the mone money to buy the plush rubbish in the plush shops" (food from the market?) equated with those who make Harrier jets for Franco.

On another page Peter Newell describes some events that have taken place on the British anarchist scene recently and has the effrontery to exclude work designed to assist Spanish anarchists in Franco's jails by the Anarchist Black Cross.

One recalls some 15 years ago a survey in FREEDOM of its readership which demonstrated the lack of young working class readers. Most of those associated with FREEDOM seem determined to keep the situation as it was discovered to be. There must be a time when those who abhor FREEDOM's bias against working people and complete lack of understanding of those who set out to resist oppression must leave a sinking boat.

Yours

J.W.

I established in the title and in the first sentence that I regarded the London and Aldershot bombs as propaganda, i.e. as a message. The distinction between 'deliberate attempt to kill or maim' and 'demonstration' is therefore made. Is J.W. suggesting that communication by this means is likely to change the direction of events and that no other form of propaganda is?
I apologise for using the word manifesto instead of communique. Further points require longer reply.

M.C.